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ABSTRACT

Written as a practical guide for mayors, civic leaders, and school board members, this book describes the politics of reform in urban school systems and clarifies options available to community leaders seeking to improve school performance. Drawing lessons from six U.S. cities that have made concerted efforts to improve their schools, the volume analyzes strengths and weaknesses among urban reform strategies, suggests how reform leaders might create programs combining reform elements, and provides specific guidance about how to design, carry out, monitor, and assess reform initiatives. The chapters are: (1) "The Realities of Urban School Reform"; (2) "Lessons from Six Cities"; (3) "Beneath the Surface: Theories of Action"; (4) "From Wishful Thinking to the Realities of Reform"; (5) "Holding a Strategy in Place"; (6) "Local Politics of Reform"; and (7) "Getting Started." An appendix contains case studies of the six cities on which the study is based. (Contains 97 endnotes.) (SLD)

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